

STRATEGIES FOR ENHANCING THE SUSTAINABILITY OF SEASONAL TOURISM BUSINESSES: A CASE STUDY OF THE OSUN- OSOGBO FESTIVAL

Authors Details

Hauwa M. Adebayo¹

Department of Tourism and Hospitality Management, Kwara State University, Malete,
Nigeria

Olusola S. Folorunso^{1*}

Department of Tourism and Hospitality Management, Kwara State University, Malete,
Nigeria

Adekunle A. Bashiru¹

Department of Tourism and Hospitality Management, Kwara State University, Malete,
Nigeria

Edward E. Akerele²

Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management, Lagos State University of Education,
Oto/Ijanikin, Nigeria

Olufunmilayo O. Lawal¹

Department of Tourism and Hospitality Management, Kwara State University, Malete,
Nigeria

Corresponding Author: - olusola.folorunso@kwasu.edu.ng

ABSTRACT: Seasonality is one of the essential characteristics of service. Tourism being a service industry is usually besets by seasonality in its tourists patronage. This study aims to investigate sareagies for enhancing the sustainability of seasonal tourism businesses via the Osun-Osogbo festival; it seeks to identify the factors contributing to seasonality in tourism businesses in the study area, examine the challenges seasonal tourism businesses face in

achieving long-term sustainability and to recommend sustainable strategies for enhancing the long-term viability and competitiveness of seasonal tourism businesses. This study adopted mixed-method approach and used questionnaire as instrument for data collected by sampled 400 respondents and data collected was analyzed with the use of descriptive statistics which include table, frequency, mean, and standard deviation. From the data gathered and analyzed, the following findings were realized. The findings revealed that seasonality in tourism businesses is largely influenced by the concentration of tourist activities during the festival period, inadequate promotion of tourism attractions throughout the year, limited tourism products outside the festival season, and weather-related factors. Furthermore, inadequate government support, poor infrastructure, high operational costs, limited access to finance, and difficulties in retaining skilled employees were identified as major challenges affecting the sustainability of seasonal tourism businesses. Finally, respondents strongly agreed that the development of additional tourist attractions, improved infrastructure, financial assistance for tourism operators, continuous staff training, stronger public-private partnerships, and year-round tourism promotion would significantly enhance the sustainability and competitiveness of tourism businesses associated with the Osun-Osogbo Festival.

Keywords: *Tourism, Sustainability, Strategy, Seasonality, Tourism Businesses.*

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the fastest-growing sectors of the global economy, contributing to employment generation, foreign exchange earnings, cultural exchange, environmental conservation, and socio-economic development. It also promotes local entrepreneurship, infrastructure development, cultural understanding, and the preservation of natural and cultural heritage. The United Nations World Tourism Organization emphasizes that sustainable tourism should balance economic prosperity, environmental protection, and social well-being while maintaining destination competitiveness (UNWTO, 2023). However, one major challenge confronting tourism destinations is seasonality, which refers to fluctuations in tourist demand between peak and off-peak periods (Ezenagu, 2020). Such fluctuations can result in unstable income, underutilization of facilities, temporary unemployment, and increased operational costs, making the sustainability of seasonal tourism businesses an important concern (Balisany, 2023).

Globally, tourism businesses have adopted strategies such as product diversification, digital marketing, event tourism, community participation, business innovation, destination branding, stakeholder collaboration, and alternative tourism products to reduce the effects of seasonality (Folorunso et al., 2026). These strategies can stabilize business income, improve employment opportunities, encourage local economic development, and strengthen destination competitiveness. Tourism sustainability therefore depends on the ability of destinations and tourism enterprises to adapt to changing market conditions while protecting cultural and environmental resources for future generations (Timothy, 2023; Ahmad & Balisany, 2023). Nevertheless, many African tourism destinations continue to experience seasonal visitation due to climatic conditions, festival calendars, school holidays, travel costs, infrastructure limitations, and security concerns, making year-round sustainability a major challenge for tourism enterprises.

Nigeria is richly endowed with cultural festivals, historical monuments, wildlife reserves, waterfalls, beaches, museums, and religious heritage sites. Tourism has therefore been recognized as an important sector capable of diversifying the Nigerian economy away from overdependence on crude oil. Government agencies, private investors, and local communities have increasingly promoted domestic tourism through cultural festivals, heritage conservation, ecotourism development, and destination marketing. Heritage tourism is particularly important because it preserves indigenous traditions while creating employment opportunities, stimulating local businesses, and generating revenue for host communities (Ezenagu, 2020).

Despite these opportunities, Nigeria's tourism industry continues to face challenges including inadequate infrastructure, inconsistent tourism policies, insufficient destination marketing, security concerns, inadequate investment, poor maintenance of tourism facilities, and seasonal fluctuations in visitor arrivals (Ahmed, 2018). Tourism businesses often experience increased patronage during major festivals, holidays, and special events but significant reductions during off-peak periods. Consequently, sustainable strategies involving improved destination management, community participation, cultural heritage preservation, environmental conservation, digital promotion, and stronger partnerships between government agencies, private investors, and local communities are necessary to improve the long-term sustainability and competitiveness of tourism businesses in Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Seasonality has remained one of the major challenges confronting tourism businesses across the world. These fluctuations result in unstable income, underutilization of business facilities, reduced employment opportunities, and difficulties in sustaining business operations throughout the year. Consequently, researchers have argued that tourism businesses must adopt sustainable strategies that enhance resilience, competitiveness, and year-round profitability (UN Tourism, 2023; Montañés-Del-Río & Medina-Garrido, 2023).

In Nigeria, cultural tourism contributes significantly to local economic development through employment creation, entrepreneurship, and income generation. Osogbo, Osun State, is internationally recognized for the Osun-Osogbo Sacred Grove and the annual Osun-Osogbo Festival, which attract thousands of domestic and international visitors. While these attractions generate substantial economic benefits during the festival period, studies have shown that tourism businesses in the area experience a significant decline in patronage after the festival season. In addition, previous studies have focused mainly on the cultural significance, heritage conservation, and marketing of the festival, with limited attention given to strategies that can sustain tourism businesses beyond the peak season (Etuk & Idowu, 2024; Osun State Government, 2023).

Although several studies have examined the socio-economic importance of the Osun-Osogbo Festival, there is still limited empirical evidence on practical strategies for enhancing the sustainability of seasonal tourism businesses in Osogbo. This gap in the literature necessitates a study that will identify the challenges associated with tourism seasonality, evaluate existing sustainability strategies, and recommend appropriate measures that can improve the long-term performance and resilience of tourism businesses in the study area.

The Aim of this study is to examine the strategies for enhancing the sustainability of seasonal tourism businesses in the study area. The study aim to achieve the following objectives: to identify the factors contributing to seasonality in tourism businesses in the study area, to examine the challenges seasonal tourism businesses face in achieving long-term sustainability, and to recommend sustainable strategies for enhancing the long-term viability and competitiveness of seasonal tourism businesses.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Seasonal Tourism Businesses

Seasonal tourism businesses are tourism-related enterprises whose operations, customer demand, and revenue fluctuate during particular periods of the year. These fluctuations are usually influenced by climatic conditions, cultural festivals, school holidays, religious celebrations, and other factors that affect tourist travel patterns. Businesses such as hotels, guest houses, restaurants, tour operations, transportation services, souvenir shops, and recreational centres often experience high patronage during peak tourism seasons and reduced demand during off-peak periods (Butler, 2001; UNWTO, 2023). Seasonality is widely recognized as one of the major characteristics of the tourism industry because tourism demand is rarely distributed evenly throughout the year. According to Butler (2001), tourism seasonality refers to the temporal imbalance in tourism activities, resulting in variations in visitor arrivals, occupancy rates, employment opportunities, and business income. Such fluctuations often create operational challenges for tourism enterprises, particularly those that depend heavily on seasonal visitors.

In Nigeria, many tourism businesses depend on festivals, holidays, and cultural events to attract visitors. A typical example is the annual Osun-Osogbo Festival in Osun State, which attracts thousands of domestic and international tourists. During the festival period, hotels, restaurants, transport operators, and local craft sellers experience increased patronage and revenue generation. However, after the festival, tourist arrivals decline considerably, affecting business profitability and employment opportunities (Aremu & Lawal, 2022). The sustainability of seasonal tourism businesses therefore depends on their ability to diversify tourism products, attract visitors throughout the year, and adopt effective management strategies that reduce the negative effects of seasonal fluctuations. Sustainable planning enables tourism businesses to remain profitable while contributing to environmental conservation and community development (UNWTO, 2023).

Sustainability in Tourism

Sustainability in tourism refers to the development and management of tourism activities in a manner that satisfies the needs of present tourists and host communities without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It emphasizes the

responsible use of natural, cultural, and economic resources while ensuring long-term environmental conservation, socio-cultural preservation, and economic viability. Sustainable tourism seeks to balance tourism development with the protection of destinations and the well-being of local communities (United Nations World Tourism Organization [UN Tourism], 2023). According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization, sustainable tourism considers the current and future economic, social, and environmental impacts of tourism by addressing the needs of visitors, the tourism industry, the environment, and host communities. It promotes responsible tourism practices that minimize negative environmental effects, preserve cultural heritage, encourage community participation, and improve the quality of life of local residents. This approach ensures that tourism destinations remain attractive and productive over time (UN Tourism, 2023). Sustainability in tourism is commonly explained through three interrelated dimensions: environmental sustainability, economic sustainability, and socio-cultural sustainability. Environmental sustainability focuses on conserving biodiversity, protecting natural resources, and reducing pollution. Economic sustainability ensures that tourism businesses remain financially viable while creating employment and income opportunities for local people. Socio-cultural sustainability emphasizes the preservation of local traditions, cultural heritage, and community values while promoting meaningful interaction between tourists and host communities (Saarinen, 2020).

Challenges of Seasonal Tourism Businesses

The major challenge is fluctuating tourist demand. Peak periods generate higher patronage, while off-peak periods can produce low sales and underused facilities. This makes revenue less predictable and can limit investment and expansion (Butler, 2001; UN Tourism, 2023).

Seasonal businesses may also struggle with labour retention and operating costs. Businesses can require additional workers during festivals but find it difficult to retain skilled employees when demand falls. At the same time, utilities, maintenance, security and other costs continue during low-demand periods (Balogun and Folorunso, 2025; Adedayo et al., 2024).

Environmental pressure is another concern. High visitor numbers can increase waste, overcrowding and pressure on natural and cultural resources. UNESCO's recent monitoring

of the Sacred Grove highlights the need for effective conservation and visitor management (UNESCO, 2024). Poor year-round marketing and inadequate infrastructure can further restrict destination competitiveness and repeat visitation.

Strategies for Sustaining Seasonal Tourism Businesses

One of the most effective strategies for sustaining seasonal tourism businesses is product diversification. This involves developing new tourism products and experiences that attract visitors during both peak and off-peak seasons. Tourism businesses can introduce cultural exhibitions, nature walks, culinary tourism, heritage tours, educational excursions, and recreational activities to encourage continuous visitation. Diversification reduces dependence on a single event or season and increases business resilience (Butler, 2001).

In Osun-Osogbo, tourism stakeholders can promote attractions such as the Osun-Osogbo Sacred Grove, museums, art galleries, traditional craft centers, and Yoruba cultural experiences throughout the year instead of relying mainly on the annual Osun-Osogbo Festival. This would encourage tourists to visit the destination at different times of the year and increase business opportunities for local enterprises (UNESCO, 2024). Continuous marketing and destination promotion are essential for attracting tourists beyond the peak tourism season. Tourism businesses should make effective use of digital marketing, social media platforms, travel websites, and destination branding to promote their products and services to both domestic and international tourists. Regular promotional campaigns help increase destination awareness and encourage repeat visits (Kotler, Bowen, & Baloglu, 2022).

For Osun-Osogbo, stakeholders can collaborate with the Osun State Government, tourism agencies, and local communities to market the destination as a year-round cultural and heritage tourism destination rather than only a festival destination. Such collaboration can expand the tourism market and improve business sustainability.

The active involvement of local communities is essential for sustainable tourism development. Community participation encourages local ownership of tourism projects, promotes cultural preservation, and ensures that tourism benefits are shared among residents. When local people participate in tourism planning and decision-making, they are

more likely to support conservation efforts and provide authentic cultural experiences for visitors (Scheyvens, 1999).

In Osun-Osogbo, involving traditional rulers, artisans, youth groups, women associations, and cultural performers in tourism planning can strengthen the sustainability of tourism businesses while preserving the cultural heritage associated with the Osun-Osogbo Festival. Environmental conservation remains a fundamental strategy for sustaining tourism businesses because natural and cultural resources constitute the primary attractions for visitors. For the Osun-Osogbo Sacred Grove, continuous conservation efforts are necessary to protect the sacred forest, wildlife, and cultural monuments from environmental degradation. Maintaining the ecological integrity of the site enhances its attractiveness to both local and international tourists (UNESCO, 2024).

Tourism entrepreneurs should organize regular training on customer service, sustainable tourism practices, digital marketing, and business management to improve organizational performance (Baum, 2015).

Training local tour guides, hospitality workers, artisans, and event organizers in Osun-Osogbo would improve service quality and enhance visitors' experiences, thereby encouraging repeat visitation and positive destination image.

Collaboration between government agencies and private tourism operators is another important strategy for sustaining seasonal tourism businesses. Governments can provide infrastructure, security, tourism policies, and investment incentives, while private investors improve accommodation facilities, transportation services, and tourism products. Such partnerships strengthen destination competitiveness and encourage sustainable tourism development (World Travel & Tourism Council [WTTC], 2023).

In Osun State, partnerships between the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, local government authorities, private investors, and community organizations can enhance tourism infrastructure and improve visitor experiences beyond the festival period.

Adequate infrastructure contributes significantly to the sustainability of tourism businesses. Good road networks, reliable electricity supply, clean water, internet connectivity, healthcare facilities, and effective security systems enhance tourists' satisfaction and

encourage longer stays. Investment in tourism infrastructure also improves business performance and destination competitiveness (World Bank, 2023).

Modern technology has become an important tool for improving the sustainability of tourism businesses. The use of online booking platforms, digital payment systems, customer relationship management software, and social media marketing enables businesses to reach wider markets and improve service delivery. Technology also helps businesses understand customer preferences and respond effectively to changing market demands (Kotler et al., 2022).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Sustainable Development Theory

Sustainable Development Theory is based on the principle that development should meet present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet theirs (WCED, 1987). In tourism, the theory connects economic viability with social responsibility and environmental protection. It supports strategies such as product diversification, community participation, conservation and responsible business practices (UN Tourism, 2023).

The theory is relevant to Osogbo because the destination must generate economic benefits while protecting the Sacred Grove and supporting host communities. It therefore provides a framework for assessing whether proposed strategies can improve business sustainability without undermining cultural and environmental resources.

Butler's Tourism Area Life Cycle (TALC) Theory

Butler's (1980) Tourism Area Life Cycle Theory explains destination development through stages including exploration, involvement, development, consolidation, stagnation and possible decline or rejuvenation. The theory emphasises planning, resource management and innovation to prevent destinations from losing their attractiveness.

The theory is applicable to Osun-Osogbo because strong festival visitation has supported tourism businesses, while concentration of demand in one period creates vulnerability. Diversification, infrastructure improvement, destination marketing and conservation can support rejuvenation and move tourism toward a more balanced, year-round pattern.

Stakeholders' theory

Stakeholder Theory argues that organisational success depends on creating value for groups that affect or are affected by an organisation, including customers, employees, government, communities, suppliers and investors (Freeman, 1984; Freeman et al., 2010). Tourism is particularly dependent on stakeholder cooperation because destinations require coordinated marketing, infrastructure, conservation and service delivery.

In Osogbo, collaboration among government agencies, tourism businesses, traditional institutions, communities, festival organisers and visitors can improve planning and reduce the effects of seasonality. The theory therefore supports a partnership-based approach to sustainable tourism development.

Empirical Review

Etuk and Idowu (2024) examined cultural heritage product marketing and hospitality business performance during the Osun-Osogbo Festival. Their study found that heritage preservation, promotion and celebration influenced patronage and revenue in hotels and restaurants, supporting the importance of sustained marketing.

Asifat et al. (2025) examined the socio-economic contributions of the festival using quantitative and qualitative data from festival participants and tourism-related operators. The study found significant employment, revenue, entrepreneurship and destination-promotion benefits but also identified strong seasonality, recommending diversification and improved tourism planning.

Oyeleye and Bigon (2025) examined environmental conditions around Osogbo and the Sacred Grove before, during and after the 2024 festival. Their findings showed increased environmental pressure during the festival and highlighted the need for integrated planning, waste management and stakeholder cooperation. Yusuf (2016) similarly identified coordination, visitor pressure, public utilities, accessibility and security as challenges affecting tourism at the Sacred Grove.

Research Gaps

Existing studies provide evidence on festival marketing, socio-economic benefits and environmental sustainability, but they do not fully integrate these issues into a business-focused framework for sustaining tourism enterprises throughout the year. This study

addresses that gap by examining the factors responsible for seasonality, the challenges faced by seasonal businesses and practical strategies for improving their long-term viability.

METHODOLOGY

A descriptive survey research design was adopted to obtain information from tourism stakeholders in Osogbo. The population comprised tourism stakeholders directly or indirectly involved in tourism activities, including hotel owners and managers, restaurant and food vendors, transport operators, tour guides, souvenir sellers, event organisers, cultural performers and festival attendees. The study used a sample of 400 respondents. The sampling approach combined purposive sampling to identify relevant tourism stakeholders with simple random sampling for respondent selection within the identified groups. All 400 questionnaires administered were retrieved and considered suitable for analysis.

Primary data was collected through a structured questionnaire. Secondary information was obtained from scholarly literature, government publications, UNESCO materials and tourism-related documents. The questionnaire used a five-point Likert scale from Strongly Agree (5) to Strongly Disagree (1). Data were analysed using frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation. A mean of 3.00 and above was treated as accepted, while a mean below 3.00 was treated as rejected.

RESULT

The findings of the survey conducted for this work are interpreted under these research questions: What are the factors contributing to seasonality in tourism businesses in the study area? What challenges do seasonal tourism businesses face in achieving long-term sustainability? What sustainable strategies can be recommended for enhancing the long-term viability?

Demographic Information of the Respondents

The findings showed that 92.0% of respondents were familiar with the Osun-Osogbo Festival, while 8.0% were not. Males constituted 57.0% of the respondents, while females accounted for 43.0%, indicating representation of both genders. Regarding age,

respondents aged 28–37 years formed the largest group (35.5%), followed by those aged 18–27 years (29.5%), 38–47 years (22.0%), and 48 years and above (13.0%). Overall, the respondents were predominantly young and middle-aged adults with relevant exposure to tourism and cultural activities.

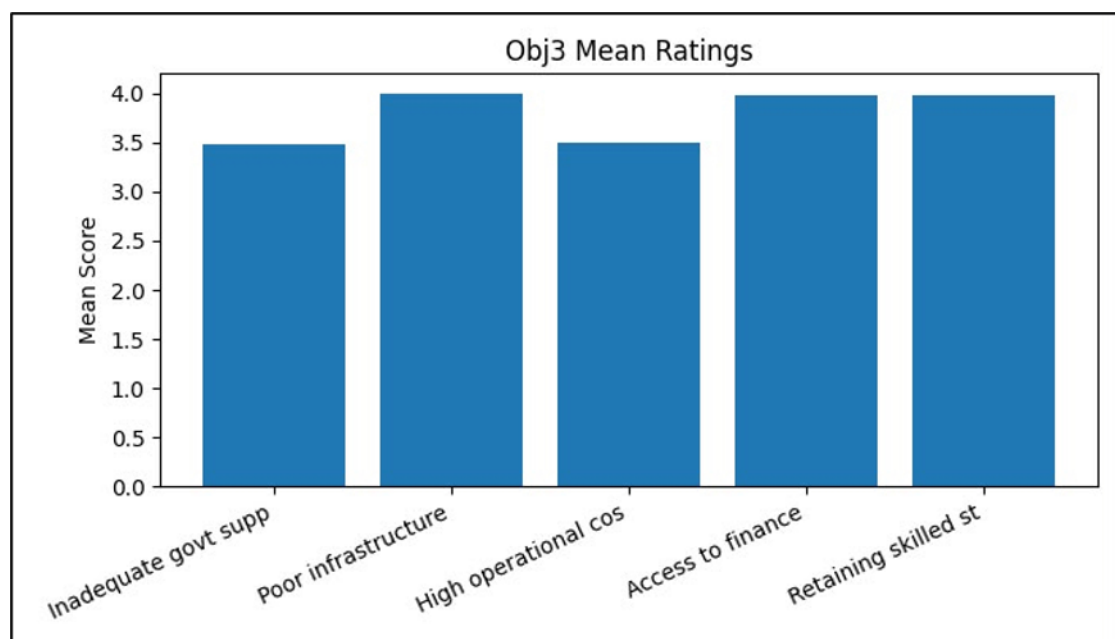
Section B

Note that any mean that is > 3.0 is significant which < 3.0 is insignificant

Analysis of Objective One: To identify the factors contributing to seasonality in tourism businesses in the study area. 5 = Strongly Agree (5) 4 = Agree (4) 3 = Neutral (3) 2 = Disagree (2) 1 = Strongly Disagree (1)

S/N	Statement	5	4	3	2	1
1	Tourist arrivals are concentrated mainly during the Osun-Osogbo Festival period.	150	100	30	100	20
2	Low tourist patronage outside the festival season affects business performance.	110	140	29	111	70
3	Inadequate tourism promotion throughout the year contributes to seasonality.	250	100	10	30	10
4	Limited tourism attractions outside the festival period reduce visitor numbers	200	70	10	120	0
5	Weather and climatic conditions influence tourist visitation patterns	210	90	10	40	50

Source: Author's field survey, 2026.



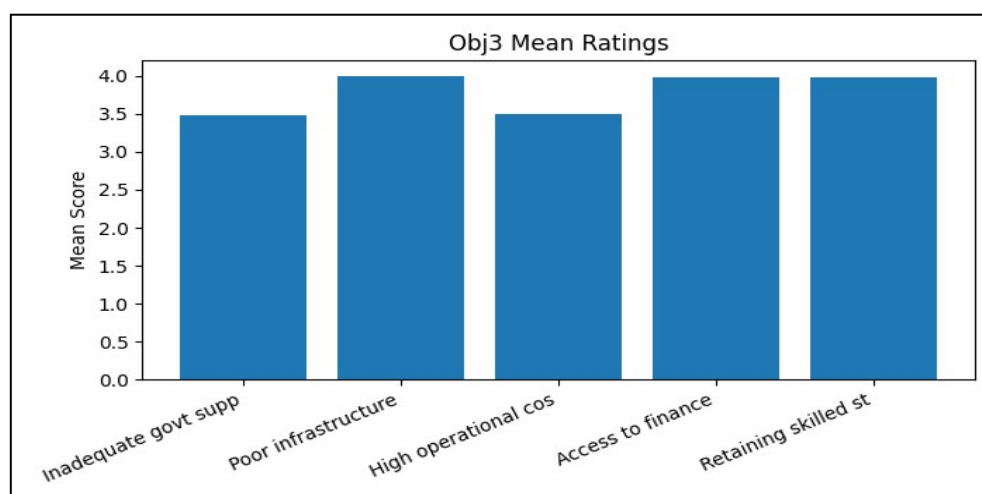
S/N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Decision
1	3.65	1.32	Accepted
2	3.28	1.48	Accepted
3	4.38	1.05	Accepted
4	3.88	1.39	Accepted
5	3.93	1.45	Accepted
Grand Mean	3.82		

Interpretation: The grand mean of 3.82 indicates that respondents agreed that factors such as concentration of tourist arrivals during the festival period, inadequate year-round promotion, limited attractions outside the festival season, and weather conditions contribute significantly to seasonality in tourism businesses.

Analysis of Objective Two: To examine the challenges seasonal tourism businesses face in achieving long-term sustainability.

S/N	Statement	5	4	3	2	1
6	Inadequate government support affects business sustainability.	115	135	25	75	50
7	Poor infrastructure hinders tourism business growth	211	89	10	70	20
8	High operational costs reduce business profitability.	141	89	50	70	50
9	Lack of access to finance limits business expansion	210	100	10	30	50
10	Seasonal fluctuations make it difficult to retain skilled employees throughout the year.	210	100	10	30	50

Source: Author's field survey, 2026.



S/N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Decision
6	3.48	1.39	Accepted
7	4.0	1.28	Accepted
8	3.5	1.42	Accepted
9	3.98	1.34	Accepted
10	3.98	1.34	Accepted
Grand Mean	3.79		

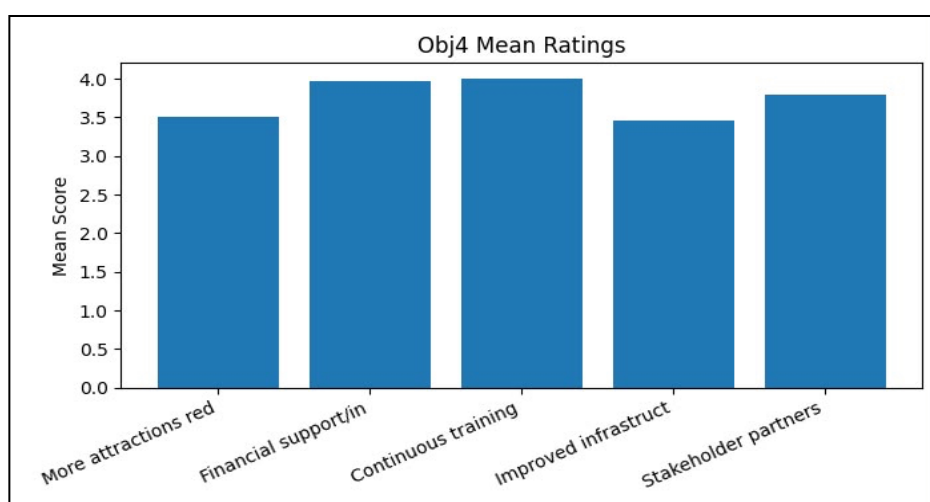
Source: Author's field survey, 2026.

Interpretation: The grand mean of 3.79 reveals major challenges include inadequate government support, poor infrastructure, high operational costs, limited access to finance and employee retention.

Analysis of Objective Three: To recommend sustainable strategies for enhancing the long-term viability and competitiveness of seasonal tourism businesses.

S/N	Statement	5	4	3	2	1
11	Developing additional tourist attractions will reduce seasonality.	141	89	50	70	50
12	Government should provide financial support and incentives to tourism businesses	210	100	10	30	50
13	Continuous training of tourism business operators will improve sustainability.	211	89	10	70	20
14	Improved infrastructure will enhance the competitiveness of tourism businesses	141	89	50	50	70
15	Strong partnerships among stakeholders will promote the long-term sustainability of tourism businesses.	200	80	20	37	63

Source: Author's field survey, 2026.



S/N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Decision
11	3.5	1.42	Accepted
12	3.98	1.34	Accepted
13	4.0	1.28	Accepted
14	3.45	1.47	Accepted
15	3.79	1.46	Accepted
Grand Mean	3.74		

Source: Author's field survey, 2026.

Interpretation: The grand mean of 3.74 indicates support for additional attractions, financial support, training, improved infrastructure and partnerships.

Discussion of Findings

The findings revealed that tourism activities in Osogbo are heavily concentrated during the Osun-Osogbo Festival period, indicating that seasonality significantly influences the performance and sustainability of tourism businesses in the destination. This finding is consistent with Butler (2001), who identifies temporal concentration of tourist demand as a major characteristic of tourism seasonality. It also resonates with Adedayo et al. (2024), whose study of the Olojo Festival in Ile-Ife demonstrated the important role of cultural festivals in promoting domestic tourism and contributing to local economic development. The concentration of visitors around major cultural festivals therefore presents both an opportunity for tourism businesses and a challenge to their sustainability outside the festival period.

The study further established that product diversification, social media marketing, customer relationship management, and collaboration with tourism agencies are among the strategies adopted by tourism businesses to address seasonal fluctuations. Respondents considered these strategies effective in sustaining business activities and attracting visitors. This finding supports Etuk and Idowu (2024), who emphasized the importance of strategic approaches to strengthening the sustainability of tourism businesses. It also agrees with Balogun and Folorunso (2025), who emphasize the importance of effective cultural resources management in achieving sustainable tourism development. Furthermore, Folorunso et al. (2026) argue from a tourism perspective that sustainable development in

Africa requires approaches that connect tourism development with broader human and community development objectives. This suggests that diversification should not merely be viewed as a business survival strategy but also as a means of creating sustained socio-economic opportunities for local communities.

The findings identified inadequate government support, poor infrastructure, high operating costs, limited access to finance, and difficulties in retaining skilled employees as major challenges confronting seasonal tourism businesses. These findings are consistent with the concerns raised by the World Bank (2023) and UN Tourism (2023) regarding structural and institutional constraints to tourism development. They also support Balogun and Folorunso (2025), who highlight the importance of effective management, institutional support, infrastructure, and stakeholder participation in the sustainable utilization of cultural resources. Similarly, Folorunso et al. (2026) underscore the need to position tourism within broader sustainable development efforts in Africa, particularly through approaches that address economic, social, institutional, and community-level development. Thus, inadequate infrastructure and limited institutional and financial support can constrain the ability of tourism businesses to generate sustained benefits for destination communities.

Respondents recommended the development of additional tourist attractions, continuous training, government financial support, improved infrastructure, and stronger stakeholder partnerships as measures for reducing the negative effects of seasonality. These recommendations are consistent with Butler's Tourism Area Life Cycle perspective, particularly the need for destinations to continually develop and diversify their tourism products to maintain attractiveness and competitiveness. The recommendations are also supported by Adedayo et al. (2024), which demonstrates the capacity of cultural festivals to promote tourism and economic development when properly supported and integrated into destination development. In the same vein, Balogun and Folorunso (2025) emphasize sustainable management of cultural resources as a pathway to strengthening tourism development, while Folorunso et al. (2026) advocate a tourism approach that contributes meaningfully to sustainable development and improves outcomes for people and communities in Africa.

Summarily, the findings indicate that the sustainability of tourism businesses associated with the Osun-Osogbo Festival cannot depend solely on the annual festival. Rather, there is

a need for year-round tourism planning, diversification of cultural and recreational attractions, improved infrastructure, capacity development, accessible financing, effective destination marketing, and stronger collaboration among government, communities, tourism businesses, and other stakeholders. These interventions are important not only for reducing tourism seasonality but also for ensuring that tourism contributes to inclusive socio-economic development and the achievement of sustainable development objectives. In this regard, the perspectives of Folorunso et al. (2026) reinforce the argument that tourism should be deliberately positioned as a tool for improving people's livelihoods and advancing sustainable development in Africa.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it is concluded that the sustainability of seasonal tourism businesses depends largely on the ability of stakeholders to reduce overdependence on the peak festival period through effective planning, product diversification, innovation, and collaboration. The study also concludes that government intervention, private sector investment, improved infrastructure, digital marketing, and stakeholder collaboration are essential for ensuring the long-term growth and sustainability of tourism businesses in the study area. Implementing these measures will strengthen the local tourism economy, create employment opportunities, improve visitor satisfaction, and promote sustainable destination development.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Tourism businesses should diversify products and services by developing cultural, heritage, culinary, nature-based and recreational experiences that can operate beyond the festival period.
2. Stakeholders should promote Osogbo as a year-round destination through social media, digital marketing, online travel platforms and coordinated destination branding.
3. Government agencies, businesses, communities and festival organisers should strengthen collaboration in tourism planning, marketing, infrastructure and heritage management.

4. Government and relevant tourism agencies should provide enabling policies, training opportunities and practical support that improve the operating environment for tourism businesses.
5. Access to affordable finance should be improved through suitable loans, grants and support schemes that enable tourism enterprises to invest, diversify and remain competitive.

References

1. Adedayo, O. F., Folorunso, O. S., Bashiru A. A. and Falabi, M. O. (2024). Assessing the Contribution of Olojo Festival to the Promotion of Domestic Tourism and Economic Development in Ile-Ife, Osun State, Nigeria. *Malete Journal of Management and Social Sciences (MAJOMSS)*, 1(2), 40-48. A Publication of Faculty of Management and Social Sciences, Kwara State University, Malete. ISSN: 1119-2682 (Technoscience) Available online: <https://majomss.com/current>
2. Asifat, J. T., Samotu, I. A., & Awe, G. T. (2024). Evaluating the socio-economic contributions of the Osun Osogbo Festival on Southwestern Nigeria: Insights for sustainable tourism development. *Management Analytics and Social Insights*, 2(1), 33–43. <https://doi.org/10.22105/masi.v2i1>.
3. Balogun, K. B. and Folorunso, O. S., 2025. Cultural Resources Management and Sustainable Tourism Development in Kwara State, Nigeria. *Proceeding of The First Ibadan International Conference in Multidisciplinary Studies* Omotayo F. O. (ed) Pp 275-284. Published by Faculty of Multidisciplinary Studies, University of Ibadan.
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/391344561_IICMS_CONFERENCE_PROCEEDINGS_2025
4. Baum, T. (2015). *Human resource management for tourism, hospitality and leisure: An international perspective* (2nd ed.). Cengage Learning.
5. Butler, R. W. (1980). The concept of a tourist area cycle of evolution: Implications for management of resources. *The Canadian Geographer*, 24(1), 5–12. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1541-0064.1980.tb00970.x>

6. Butler, R. W. (2001). Seasonality in tourism: Issues and implications. In T. Baum & S. Lundtorp (Eds.), *Seasonality in tourism* (pp. 5–21). Pergamon.
7. Etuk, J. S., & Idowu, V. K. (2024). Cultural heritage product marketing and hospitality business performance: An empirical assessment of the Osun-Osogbo Festival, Osun State. *World Bulletin of Social Sciences*.
8. Ezenagu, N. (2020). Heritage resources as a driver for cultural tourism in Nigeria. *Cogent Arts & Humanities*, 7(1), Article 1734331. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2020.1734331>
9. Freeman, R. E. (1984). *Strategic management: A stakeholder approach*. Pitman Publishing
10. Freeman, R. E., Harrison, J. S., Phillips, R. A., Parmar, B. L., & De Colle, S. (2010). *Stakeholder theory: The state of the art*. Cambridge University Press.
11. Folorunso, O. S., Bashiru, A. A., Akerele, E. E., Oyedun, M. A., Solihu, A. O., & Arazu, C. G. (2026). Making Sustainable Development Goals Work for People in Africa: A Tourism Perspective. *ECOSIGHT*, 1(1), 36-47.
12. Kotler, P., Bowen, J. T., & Baloglu, S. (2022). *Marketing for hospitality and tourism* (8th ed.). Pearson.
13. Oyeleye, O., & Bigon, L. (2025). Urbanization and environmental sustainability: Planning diagnosis of symbiosis between Osogbo City and UNESCO World Heritage Site in Osun State, Nigeria. *Land*, 14(4), Article 707. <https://doi.org/10.3390/land14040707>
14. Saarinen, J. (2020). Tourism and sustainable development: Exploring theoretical and geographical perspectives. *Sustainability*, 12(21), 1–15.
15. Scheyvens, R. (1999). Ecotourism and the empowerment of local communities. *Tourism Management*, 20(2), 245–249. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0261-5177\(98\)00069-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0261-5177(98)00069-7)

16. UN Tourism. (2023). Tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals – Progress Report 2023. UN Tourism.
17. UNESCO. (2005). Osun-Osogbo Sacred Grove. World Heritage Centre. <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1118>
18. World Commission on Environment and Development. (1987). Our common future. Oxford University Press.
19. Yamane, T. (1967). Statistics: An introductory analysis (2nd ed.). Harper & Row.

